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SERMON

PREACH'D before the

QUEEN,

AT

WINDSOR,

September 14. 1707.

11th Chapter of HOSEA, 9th Verse.

— I am God and not Man.

*By J. ADAMS, D. D. Chaplain in
Ordinary to Her Majesty.* K

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L O N D O N :

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ERRATA

OF THE

WINDSOR

September 1850



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11th Chapter of H O S E A, 19th Verse.

— *I am God and not Man* —

Here is nothing that contributes more to each Man's Happiness, and to the Publick Good, than the regulating his Passions, and restraining his Resentments, the being of a meek, merciful, and forgiving Temper ; therefore this is the great Design, and certain Effect of true Christianity, and God leads us towards it, not only by many Precepts, but also by his own Example ; particularly, by setting before us, in what manner he himself deals with sinful Men, and in how very different away they deal with one another.

But this is now done so lively, so emphatically, in these few Words, *I am God and not Man*.

For God having sent this Prophet to denounce his judgments against the *Ten Tribes*, which had revolted from him, and which were often called *Ephraim*, from the Chief of them, and seeming just ready to put them to Execution ; he relents of a sudden, with all the tenderness of an indulgent Parent, and cries out. *ver. 8. How shall I give thee up Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee Israel ? How shall I make thee as Admah ? How shall I set thee as Zeboim ? mine Heart is turned within me, my Remembrances are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine Anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God and not Man. God, Gracious, Patient, Forgiving : God, who in the midst of judgment thinketh upon Mercy, Not Man, still ready to Execute the fierceness of his Anger against his innocent or mistaken Brother.*

Wherefore, although these Words are full of Grace and Mercy, yet they contain a pathetick Reproof, and must give a passionate and revengeful Man a sudden and surprising Sight of himself; and if he had any Virtue left, wou'd shame him into Patience, Gentleness and Charity. That they may have this happy Effect, we beg leave to discourse of them farther in this method.

I. I shall give you a short View of the Divine and Human Nature, and shew the vast difference between God and Man, especially as to his dealing with Men and Mens with one another.

II. I shall shew, That the greatest Improvement of Human Nature, is to imitate God in those Attributes in respect to which, he declares himself here to be *God and not Man*.

III. That, as this is required in the Gospel, in the most strict and positive manner, so the greatest Assistance and most powerful Motives, are to be found there to this Purpose.

For the first. The very Name of God must fill the rational Soul with all that is Perfect and Adorable Wisdom, Justice, Holiness and Goodness, flow in at once, upon the Mind, at the first mention of it: But of all these, none is more visible to us, than his Goodness; none is there that he delights in more himself. It is *this* which he wou'd have the Foundation of our Worship and Obedience: It's *thro' this*, that he wou'd have us behold his other Attributes; That we might not be startled at his universal Knowledge, not tremble at his Almighty Power, when we are assur'd that both are attended and directed by his infinite Goodness.

Yet to have a right Notion of God's Goodness, we are not only to consider him as our Creator and Preserver; or as the bounteous Giver of all good Things; but also as the reliever of our Afflictions, and the comforter of our Sorrows; neither should we consider him only as forbearing and long-suffering, as to this World

as remitting all Punishment for the World to come :
 this can be only through Christ Jesus.

For otherwise, how could we by the help of Reason;
 the light of Nature, ever be assur'd, that Divine
 Justice cou'd be satisfied for Sin ? For one Attribute to
 speak in upon another, wou'd argue imperfection in
 Divine Nature ; therefore, tho' God shou'd ex-
 tend ever so much in Goodness, this wou'd not make
 amends for any defect in his Holiness or Justice : And
 since God has given Laws even in the state of Nature,
 founded upon the Notions of Good and Evil ; since
 he has explain'd, and confirm'd those Laws by Reve-
 lation, and annexed solemn and dreadful Threats up-
 on the breach of them ; since all Sin is the breach of
 one or more of these Laws, and Punishment must be due
 to it, both according to God's Truth and Justice : How
 cou'd Divine Goodness have been at liberty to have ex-
 tended it self, unless these had been satisfied ? But, how
 cou'd they ever have been so ? but by the perfect Obe-
 dience, and meritorious Sufferings of the Holy Jesus.
 From hence therefore is it, from hence alone, that Di-
 vine Mercy shines out upon the World, in Forbearance
 and Long suffering, in Pardon and Forgiveness ; such
 forgiveness as extends not only to the remitting of
 temporal, but of Eternal Punishment ; nay, to the
 bestowing of an Eternal Reward.

Wherefore, tho' Natural Religion has had its Rap-
 tures of Gratitude, and Hymns of Praise ; yet this won-
 derful Manifestation of Divine Goodness, astonish'd
 the Angels themselves, and was the Subject of that New
 Song in Heaven, when thousands of thousands of them
 stood down before the *Lamb that was dumb before the
 throne, and opened not his mouth, crying out with a loud
 voice of Joy and Thanksgiving, Worthy is the Lamb that
 was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and
 Strength, and Glory, and Blessing. — Blessing, Honour,
 and Power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and
 to the Lamb for ever and ever, Rev. v. 12, 13.*

This is but a short view of Divine Goodness and Mercy, towards sinful Man: But alas! on the other side, how does sinful Man behave himself towards his Brother! how often does he swell with Pride, Envy and Malice! how implacable is his Anger! how rash his Revenge! what fury is in his Looks! what Curses in his Mouth! and what Cruelty in his Actions! Peevish and Restless in his Retirements, *A Lyon in his House, and Frantick among his Servants, Eccles. iv. 3.* Abroad, jealous of his Wit, his Knowledge or his Courage; and thro' Impatience to shew them all, Insolent and Unsociable: Mingling his Resentments even with his Devotions, asking Forgiveness, tho' resolv'd to grant none; and bringing an hard and revengeful Heart, instead of a broken and a contrite One, into the presence of a merciful and forgiving Redeemer. Or if he happen to be brought to any Temper at last, then, how provoking are the Formalities of Reconciliation! how absurd are the Niceties and Scruples of pretended Honour! while he measures out just so much Forgiveness, for so much Worship and Submission from his Fellow Creatures.

This is so very true of so many Thousands, that the Prophet here makes it a general description of Human Nature: But is this the Creature that was made after God's Image? Can this be the Disciple of the Meek and the Suffering and Forgiving Son of God? yet to increase our Wonder, this sad difference between God and Man will appear more remarkable, if we compare them more particularly.

I. First then let us consider the Great Majesty of the most High God: How Glorious! How Powerful! How terrible it is, as the Prophet *Habbakkuk* excellently describes it, *cap. 3. v. 5, 6. Before him went the Pestilence, and burning Coals went forth at his Feet. He stood and measured the Earth: He beheld, and drove asunder the Nations, and the everlasting Mountains were scattered, the perpetual Hills did bow. The Sun and Moon stood still in the*

Habit

itation, as he marched through the Land in Indignation,
 refreshed the Heathen in his Anger. But alas! what is
 Man! Man whose Wisdom is Folly, and Power Weak-
 ness! Who dwelleth in Houses of Clay, whose Foundation is
 the Dust, who is crushed before the Moth, Job. 4. v. 19.
 This is that Creature so jealous in his Pride, so pas-
 ionate in his Temper: This is the Wretch that Ra-
 curses, and Blasphemes upon every Trifle; that
 revenges all Injuries and forgives none; That is implaca-
 ble to his Neighbour, and insolent to his God; while
 that great and powerful Being, is slow to Anger, and
 bounteous in Mercy; while the glorious Majesty of Hea-
 ven, though provok'd with a thousand, thousand sins;
 though he sees his Laws transgress'd, and his Mercies de-
 feated every Day, every Moment; yet still is forbear-
 ing, and Long-suffering, still waiting to be Gracious to

2. God is Eternal, *He only hath Immortality*, 1 Tim.
 16. Because he is without Beginning, as well as
 without End; and because 'tis he alone that can impart
 to others: For such too is his Mercy, extending to
 Eternity. 'Twas not enough that God took Man out of
 the Dust, and endow'd him with a rational Soul, un-
 less that Soul were made Immortal, that he might
 communicate his Goodness to it for ever, and make it
 happy to Eternity; And O! by what wonderful means
 Divine Mercy work to bring this to pass, after that
 Man had justly forfeited all Pardon, all Forgiveness:
 won by the Death of the Holy Jesus.

But if God is thus Eternal, both as to his Essence,
 and as to the extent of his Mercy: How short is Man's
 momentary Being, who is made to possess a few Months of
 life. — *Whose Life is even as a Vapour that appeareth for
 a little time, and then vanisheth away*, James cap. 4. v.
 But for all this, how boundless is his Anger? What
 a variety of Projected, of distant Revenge does he form?
 He aims at Eternity in nothing so much as in his Ma-
 lediction, and gladly would pursue his Enemy to Ruin, to

Death, to Hell it self: In the mean while, Life wears away and Death draws on, and then this vain Persecutor of himself, as well as others, sinks down silently into the Grave, *and all his Thoughts (of Revenge) perish*, and all his Passions are laid, but then he must rise again to Judgment: Wherefore, how excellent is the Advice, *Remember thy End, and let Enmity cease. Remember Corruption and Death, and abide in the Commandments. Remember the Commandments, and bear no Malice to thy Neighbour*, Ecclus. xxviii. 6, 7.

The same Comparison might be made, as to God's other Attributes; his Omniscience, his Wisdom, his Holiness, &c. but what has been said as to these, may suffice to shew the great and sad difference between God and Man, as to the subject of this Discourse: And all how Comprehensive! How Useful! how Emphatic! the Words of the Text are, *I am God and not Man*: For as Good and Evil, Wisdom and Folly, Truth and Falshood, are better distinguish'd, where they are plac'd near to one another: So Man's Anger and Revenge must shew more odious, when set in the Lustre, and Brightness of God's Patience and Mercy, and Man ought to be ashamed of his manner of treating his Brother accordingly.

But virtuous Shame kindles new Resolutions of Obedience, and urges on the Soul in a kind of Impatience to make amends for what is past; wherefore, to guide and direct it in so doing, I shall shew,

II. That the greatest Improvement of Humane Nature, is to imitate God in *those Attributes*, in respect of which, he declares himself to be *God and not Man*.

Nothing debases Humane Nature more, than the being of a Passionate and Implacable Temper: Calmness and Easiness of Mind, are the effects of good Sense as well as good Nature; they are the result of conscious Virtue, and flow from the just Security which Man has, as to himself, whenever there shall be occasion for his Knowledge, Learning, Courage, &c. by

Passion

tion is the contrary to all these, and is made use of, to conceal the want of them, or will certainly render them all unprofitable : Therefore nothing can be more contemptible.

And tho' we are apt to despise those that are slow to apprehend, and to laugh at Dulness and Stupidity ; yet a Furious Passionate Temper is far worse : Dulness, indeed, hinders increase of Knowledge, but then it is seldom troublesome to it self or others ; whereas violent Passion hurries Men into Error, in the search of Truth ; and into Injustice in all Dealing with our Neighbour ; and, as a Man cools, leaves Vexation and Remorse behind it ; and in these and other respects is worse than Stupidity it self : For as to the Publick Good, how much better is it, that Reason should (in the same number of Persons) be always Useless, than always Dangerous ? and as for a Man's self, how much more Innocent and Happy is he, who is almost Begg'd, than he who is in a continual Tempest ? Seeſt thou a Man, that is hasty in his Words ? (saith Solomon, Prov. xxix. 20.) *there is more hope of a Fool than of him,* because it is much easier to inform Dulness, than to convince Pride. But if Folly should, for all this, seem all worse than Passion, the same Author tells us, Chap. xiv. ver. 29. *That he that is hasty of Spirit exalteth himself,* raises it to the highest Pitch, makes it most Conspicuous and Remarkable ; if so, as this is the effect of Passion, nothing can debase or degrade Human Nature more : Whereas it is improv'd and exalted in the highest manner, by imitating God, particularly in those Attributes which are referr'd to in the next.

That God ought to be imitated, is generally agreed, but then People are apt to mistake in the choice of those Attributes which are most proper and beneficial for their Imitation. We are not capable of being very like God, in his Omniscience, or his Almighty Power, but

but we are very capable of being like him in his Goodness. Yet our Vanity makes us aspire chiefly after the other, insomuch, that we would not only be as Wise as God, but *Correct* his Wisdom, tho' manifested by Revelation, in the Making, Governing, and what is most strange, in the *Redeeming* of the World. We grasp at what we can of his Power, and according to the measure we have of it, turn it against our Fellow Creatures; but who is there that strives to imitate his Goodness? This alas! is few Mens Care, though it be every Bodies Duty and Advantage; therefore is it, that the little we can attain to of the other, becomes hurtful; therefore is it, that Power so often runs into Oppression, and Wisdom into Cunning; whereas, he that proposes to imitate God's Goodness chiefly, becomes himself a publick Good, and then the more Power and the more Wisdom *He* has, the better is it for Mankind. This made that excellent Emperor *Antoninus*

encourage himself so often to his Duty: *The best way of Revenge, says he, is not to do like him that injures you, let this one thing be thy constant Pleasure and Delight, (speaking to himself) to go on, from one act of doing Good, to another, having God's Example still before thee.* And in another place

Lib. 6. § 23. Endeavour to continue always such, as Philosophy would make thee, viz. To worship the Gods, and to do good to Mankind; Life is but short, the best Fruit we can have of it, is to preserve a good Conscience, and to do Good to the Publick.

How safely did God entrust so much Power, with so much Goodness! How gracious is he, when he raises up such Princes to the World! But how Dull and Ingratefull are they, who, when they have such a Blessing, such an Example, will not imitate it accordingly!

But if they would do so, the best way to do Good is to begin with Forgiveness and Mercy, because the

open the Door to all kinds of Beneficence, where-
 Inforgiveness shuts it : And that too, not only,
 inst particular Enemies, but against every Body
 ; because Peoples Tempers grow Soure, and their
 parts Hardened, through continual Thoughts and
 contrivances of Revenge ; but Goodness keeps the
 l Tender and Compassionate, and like the Widows
 ; increases while it is poured out, and imparted to
 ers ; this is a Treasure never to be exhausted, or
 en from us ; nay, it is not in a Man's Power, (be-
 se it cannot be in his Will) to confine it ; a Man
 y keep his Knowledge or his Money to himself, but
 never can his Goodness ; this is diffusive as Light,
 ich is the Beauty of Heaven ; as swift and as reviving
 hat is ; and thousands of Creatures owe their Well-
 ng, though not their Being, to it : Nor can any
 sfortune, either Poverty, Sicknes, or Disgrace, de-
 oy it : It flourishes in Death it self, for even then a
 eek, charitable, and forgiving Christian may do
 od to many, by his Example, and by his Prayers ;
 y, what is more, this secures People against the
 ide of Greatness, the Vanity of Success, and the Flat-
 y of Prosperity : And in all Events and Circum-
 nces adorns every Part and Character of Life ; makes
 Man the best Husband, the best Father, the best Son,
 e best Friend, the best Subject in the World. Where-
 re, for the compleating of this Argument, I come to
 ew in the next place,

III. That, as this is required in the Gospel, in the
 ost strict and positive manner, so the greatest Assi-
 nce and most powerful Motives are to be found there
 this purpose.

Though our Heavenly Father declares himself in
 e Text to be *God and not Man* ; yet as to the *most re-*
markable Manifestation of his Goodness, it may be truly
 d, That he never appeared to be God more, than
 en he was Man, because the Union of the Divine
 and

and Human Nature in Christ Jesus, both as to the great End of it, the Salvation of Mankind; and the means of accomplishing this, the most cruel Death the Crucify'd Jesus, was such an Instance of Divine Love and Mercy, as infinitely exceeded all that the World had ever found, or could ever possibly have conceived before: Wherefore, as we Christians have the greater Knowledge and Experience of Divine Goodness and are made capable of enjoying the Benefits of it even to Eternity, so we are oblig'd to a more perfect Imitation of it, towards one another.

For this Reason it is, that this is the chief Subject of our Saviour's Sermon upon the Mount, when he first began his Prophetical Office. Out of the *nine Blessings* which he begins that Discourse withal, *four* are promised to the *Poor in Spirit*, the *Meek*, the *Merciful*, and the *Peace-makers*, *St. Matth. chap. v. ver. 3, 5, 7, 9.* And when he comes to explain and improve the Moral Law, *Ye have heard* (says he *ver. 21.*) *that it was said by them of old Time, thou shalt not Kill.* — *But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his Brother without a cause shall be in danger of the Judgment.* *St. Jerome* says, that these Words [*without a Cause*] were not added in very many ancient Copies, according to which we ought not to be angry upon any Cause whatsoever. *

After many other Passages to the same purpose, we have heard that it hath been said, *ver. 43, 44.* *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thine Enemy.* But he says unto you *love your Enemies, Bless them that Curse you, do Good to them that Hate you, and Despitely Use you,* &c. Which having enforc'd in the three following Verses he concludes thus. *Be ye Perfect, as your Heavenly Father is Perfect,* which *St. Luke* interprets in this manner

* *Qui irascitur Fratri suo sine Causa, reus erit Judici, licet in prioribus Codicibus Antiquis, sine Causa additum non sit, ut scilicet ne sine causa quidem, debeamus Irasci.* Lib. 2. adv. Pelagian. pag. 282. Euseb.

merciful as your Heavenly Father is also Merciful,
 p. vi. ver. 36. as if the Perfection of the Divine Na-
 consisted chiefly in shewing Mercy, and we could
 roach to it in nothing so very near, as in doing the
 e. And when he taught his Disciples that excel-
 Form of Prayer, he reflects upon, and enforces
 that one part which relates to our Neighbour. *For*
forgive Men their Trespases, your Heavenly Father will
forgive you. But if ye forgive not Men their Trespases,
neither will your Father forgive your Trespases, Matth. vi.
 15. Alas! nothing puts a stop to Divine Goodness;
 nothing hinders the Graces of the Holy Spirit; nothing
 affects us so immediately to Divine Justice, as an Un-
 fortable and Untorgiving Temper: Therefore is
 Mercy and Forgiveness recommended to us so pressing-
 upon the most important Occasions, as at the re-
 ceiving of the Holy Sacrament, and at the Hour of
 Death. Therefore besides the many other Precepts
 which our Saviour gave (too numerous to be repeat-
 ed; for Meekness, Humility, and Love of one an-
 other, he enforces them all by his own Glorious Exam-
 ple. *Learn of me, for I am Meek and Lowly.* And again,
A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye Love one ano-
ther, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another, John
 13. 34. A new Commandment, not as to the Nature,
 but as to the Extent of it, and the great Example which
 we are to follow.

Chrysostom presses this admirably in one of his Ho-
 milies upon the *Romans*, (λογ. κγ.) where supposing a
 man to be in some suspense, how far, and toward what
 actions he ought to exercise his Charity; "Make no
 difference at all (says he) in such Cases, but Forgive,
 relieve, even him that would have Murdered thee.
 For thou art the Disciple of him that Pray'd for his
 Murderers. Thou art the Servant of that Jesus that
 healed him that came out to take him, that received
 the Thief into Paradise which reviled him, for both

did

“ did so at first ; that was grieved in Spirit, not
 “ what he was to suffer himself, but when he foresaw
 “ what would befall the Traytor *Judas*. Blessed Lord
 “ what an Example of Patience and Humility dost thou
 “ leave us ! But alas, how slow are we to follow
 “ it ?

Furthermore, lest Precept and Example should be
 too weak for a Duty so hard to Flesh and Blood, we
 have the Promises of God's Holy Spirit, which will
 afford us far greater Assistance, than can be obtained
 from Natural Reason ; and therefore if our Religion
 require more of us in this particular, it ought to be
 remembered that it supplies greater Helps to perform it.
 For this Blessed Spirit, as it moved upon the Waters
 and brought Confusion into Order, and Deformity into
 Beauty at the Creation ; so will it lay the angry Passions
 of a disorder'd Soul, and inspire into it Thoughts and
 Desires of Peace and Reconciliation.

But then this Spirit cannot be obtained, but by puri-
 fying the Soul by true Repentance ; for while Guilt
 lies festering at the Heart, and an ill Conscience rageth
 within, People fly into Passion upon every Occasion,
 and lose the assistance of their Natural Reason, as well
 as of God's Holy Spirit. But when a Man has once
 made his Peace with God, he will naturally be at Peace
 with all the World. The Quiet and Joy of a good
 Conscience will shine through all his Words and Actions,
 and *that* Gracious and Beneficent *Being* who is God
 and not Man, will strengthen him from Above, and
 communicate unto him something of *that* Spirit of
 Meekness, Forgiveness and Love, which was poured
 out without measure upon the Holy Jesus.

Lastly, Let us remember that our Salvation depends
 upon this Duty in particular, as appears from what
 was said above, concerning that Passage in the Lord's
 Prayer, and is farther shew'd at large in the Parable
 of the Merciless Servant, St. *Matt.* 18. v. 23. Who

not upon his Fellow-Servant for a small Debt, after
 fore had been forgiven so great a one himself. His Lord
 d Lord makes his former act of Mercy, and *Delivers him to*
 ty di *Tormentors, till he should pay all that was due to him;*
 o follo which our Saviour applys in those Remarkable and
 adful Words, *ver. 35. So likewise shall my Heavenly*
 ould *father do unto you, if ye from your Hearts, forgive not eve-*
 ood, *ne his Brother their Trespases.* So shall he deliver you
 ich w to the Tormentors till you have paid all that is
 obtain to him that is for ever, such Payment being abso-
 Relig ly impossible.

ht to This may seem something strange at first, and it is
 rform ed the most difficult part of our Duty: But then
 Wate ns remember that it is our Gracious Redeemer that
 nity in uires this of us, that requires it as a Test of our
 Passio e and Gratitude to him: And that the greater the
 ights a iculty is, the greater will be the Reward: We may
 Men disguise their Passions every day, for their In-
 it by st; we may observe the greatest Enemies converse
 ile Gu ether to serve a turn, with all the decencies of well-
 nce rap Malice: But besides the baseness of dissimulation,
 Occas almost as hard to disguise revengeful Passions long,
 , as w e is to conquer them; therefore, if Men can do the
 has on for their temporal Interest, surely they might do
 e at Pe other for their Eternal Salvation.

f a go have now gonethrough what I propos'd to speak to
 and Ad he beginning of this Discourse, and given a short
 ho is w of Divine and Humane Nature, especially as to
 ove, a d's dealing with Men, and Mens dealing with one
 Spirit other, and shew'd the great and sad difference between
 as pou m in this particular. And that the highest Improve-
 n depe ment of Humane Nature consists in the imitating God
 om w those Attributes referr'd to in the Text. That as the
 he Lon Gospel requires this in the most strict and positive man-
 Parable , so the greatest Assistance and most powerful Mo-
 Who es, are to be found there to this purpose.

As what has been said, may be of use towards each
 Man's

Man's private Quiet and Happiness; so it may contribute something towards the Peace and Prosperity of Publick; because it is from indulging their Passions at home that People become Troublesome abroad, run into Parties of all sorts, and then let whatever happen, no matter, so they do but satisfy their Interest or their Revenge.

Therefore the Regulating of violent passions is, what a Man owes to his Country, as well as to himself. the best way to do so, is to learn to be a good Christian. To be firm and steddly to our Holy Religion; Faith to that meek and forgiving Jesus, who by his repeated Commands, and perfect Example, leads us to the Heavenly Virtues, and makes them the condition of our Salvation.

Put on therefore (as the Elect of God, Holy and Beloved Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and Forgiving one another; if any Man have a Quarrel against you, even as Christ Forgave you, (O let us remember that continually) even as Christ Forgave you, so also do ye, Col. 3. 12, 13.



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